

Message Text

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ACTION SPM-01

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NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AGR-20 AID-20

EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 SWF-02 OIC-04 SCI-06 CEQ-02

CU-05 HEW-08 SIL-01 LAB-06 NSF-04 SR-02 ORM-03 DRC-01

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SUBJECT: WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE - COMMITTEE II - ENVIRONMENT

ON AUGUST 23, CHRISTIAN A. HERTER, JR., ALTERNATE DELEGATE,
US DELEGATION MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO THE WPC SECOND
COMMITTEE ON POPULATION, ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES:
OVER THE LAST TWO DAYS, WE HAVE HEARD A GOOD DEAL OF DISCUSSION--
IN FACT THERE WERE SEVEN CONSECUTIVE SPEECHES -- TO THE EFFECT THAT:

-- COLONIAL AND NEOCOLONIAL POWERS, BECAUSE OF CAPITALISTIC
EXPLOITATION, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE WORLD'S POLLUTION
AND THE IMBALANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

-- THERE SO-CALLED "PLANNED ECONOMIES" HAVE PERFECTED A BALANCE
BETWEEN NATURE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE POLIOCAL SYSTEM WHEREBY THERE
IS NO SHORTAGE OF RESOURCES AND NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT POPULATION
AND ENVIRONMENT.

-- IN FACT, SAID THE DELEGATE FROM THE SOVIET UNION, WITH
PROPER PLANNING, THE NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY AND THE ELIMINATION OF
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CAPITALISTIC MONOPOLIES, THE EARTH COULD COMFORTABLY FEED 35

BILLION PEOPLE.

-- IN SUM, THE RELATITNSHIP BETWEEN POPULATION, RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT PRESENTS NO PROBLEM ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE TO BE CONCERNED AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. EVERY COUNTRY CAN MANAGE QUITE ADEQUATELY FOR ITSELF.

LEAVING ASIDE THE RELATIVE MERITS OF DIFFERING SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO REVIEW A FEW FACTS.

ACCORDING TO A PAPER PUBLISHED BSOTHE UNITED NATIONS ENTITLED "WORLD POPULATION AND FOOD SUPPLIES" (E/CONF.60/CBP/19), A TABLE ENTITLED "THE CHANGING PATTERN OF WORLD GRAIN TRADE" INDICATES THAT WHILE EASTERN EUROPE AND THE USSR, AS ONE OF THE SIX WORLD REGIONS, HAD AN EXPORT SURPLUS IN 1934-1938 OF 5 MILLION METRIC TONS, IN 1973 THIS SAME REGION HAD TO IMPORT 27 MILLION TONS. NORTH AMERICA, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD AN EXPORT SURPLUS OF 88 MILLION TONS IN 1973.

FOR THIS GROUP OF COUNTRIES, WITH THEIR ALLEGEDLY PERFECTLY BALANCED SYSTEMS, TO SAY THAT THE WORLD, FILLED AS IT IS WITH IMPERFECTION, CAN FEED 35 BILLION PEOPLE W IN THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO FEED THEMSELVES FOR THE LAST 10 YEARS STRIKES ONE AS BEING SOMEWHAT INDIFFERENT TO REALITY.

FURTHERMORE, THAT RAPACIOUS EPITOME OF CAPITALIUO--AS THEY HAVE DESCRIBED THE USA--HASN'T BEEN DOING TOO BADLY AT FEEDING THE REST OF THE WORLD. DURING THE PERIOD JULY 1, 1954 TO DECEMBER 31, 1973, U.S. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO DEVELOPING NATIONS PROVIDED 34 BILLION POUNDS OF WHEAT, 37 BILLION POUNDS OF WHEAT FLOUR, 5.6 BILLION OF BULGAR WHEAT AND 600 MILLION POUNDS OF ROLLED WHEAT. FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, THE U.S. HAS BEEN THE WORLD'S LARGEST EXPORTER OF WHEAT, FEED GRAINS, COTTON AND OIL SEED PRODUCTS. FOR WHEAT AND FLOUR, THE U.S. AND CANADA'S PERCENTAGE OF WORLD EXPORTS IS IN EXCESS OF 50 PERCENT; FOR FEED GRAINS, IN EXCESS OF 50 PERCENT; COTTON, 54 PERCENT AND THE U.S. SUPPLIES ABOUT 80 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S EXPORT MARKET IN SOY BEANS. IN ADDITION, THE U.S. IS NOW THE WORLD'S MAJOR EXPORTER OF RICE.

CANADA AND THE U.S., AND TO A LESSER EXTENT AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, ARE IN FACT THE BREAD BASKET OF THE WORLD, BUT THE RESERVE THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR EMERGENCIES--MASS STARVATION, CRITICAL FOOD SHORTAGES--IS RUNNING OUT. THIS RESERVE IN NORTH AMERICA IS NOW DOWN TO 27 DAYS OF WORLD CONSUMPTION. THE ONLY READILY AVAILABLE RESERVE OF UNUSED CROP LAND--IN THE U.S.--HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETELY PLANTED AND, AS WE HEARD YESTERDAY, BOTH THE U.S. AND CANADA THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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YEAR ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH WEATHER.

THIS IS WHY, MR. CHAIRMAN, WE FEEL IT IS SO VITAL THAT THERE BE A SLOW-DOWN IN THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

WE MAY BE ABLE TO MANAGE TODAY AND NEXT YEAR ON FOOD, ALTHOUGH ONLY AT A MINIMAL DIETARY LEVEL FOR A SUBSTANTIAL PERCENTAGE OF THE PEOPLE. BUT WHAT OF 10 YEARS FROM NOW, OR * YEARS? THE MOST OPTIMISTIC ESTIMATE IS THAT WORLD POPULATION WILL DOERLE BY THE YEAR 2000, NO MATTER WHAT WE DO. EACH DAY 200,000 MORE PEOPLE ARE

BORN AND EACH YEAR 75-80 MILLION NEW PEOPLE HAVE TO BE FED. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN MANY COUNTRIES IS ALREADY FALLING BEHIND POPULATION GROWTH. WE CAN'T DO MUCH ABOUT THE YEAR 2000 BUT IF WE START NOW IN UURITRSLY TRYING TO LOWER THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH, WE MAY BE ABLE TO AVOID QUADRUPLING THE WORLD'S POPULATION BY THE YEAR 2035.

WE AGREE WITH OUR COLLEAGUES FROM THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES THAT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND FURTHER EXPLORATION THE WORLD MAY AVOID A CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF MINERALS. EVEN THE ENERGY CRISIS MAY BE MET, ALTHOUGH WE ALL KNOW HOW OIL PRICES HAVE AFFECTED THE ECONOMIES OF THE WORLD TODAY.

WHATNNE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT IS ARABLE LAND (IT IS ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE TO CREATE NEW ARABLE LAND) AND A TECHNOLOGICAL CEILING ON PER ACRE OIELDS ON EXISTING LAND. IN ADDITION, MANY EXPERTS ARE PREDICTING A DIMINISHING SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER FOR

AGRICULTURE AND THE DEMANSHTFEQAN EXPONENTIALLY GROWING POPULATION.

THIS IEOQSY MR. CHAIRMAN, WE FEEL THERE IS AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BACWEEN POPULATION AND RESOURCES AND BETWEEN POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT--HERE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT POVERTY, POLLUTION, DISEASE AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE. THE DELEGATE FROM INDONESIA GAVE US YESTERDAY A VIVID EXPOSITION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN HIS COUNTRY.

NOR DO WE THINK THE OVER-ALL IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND ON NATURAL RESOURCES CAN BE VIEWED ANY LONGER AS A SERIES OF PURELY NATIONAL PROBLEMS WHICH CAN REALISTICALLY BE SOLVED ON A NATIONAL BASIS, NOR IS IT REALLY AN IDEOLOGICAL L RBLEM--THE CAPITALISTS VERSUS THE COMMUNISTS. WE ALL MUST RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEM

--

AND TAKE ACTION.

WE SIMPLY CANNOT IGNOREJEAAS A WORLD COMMUNITY--THE FACT THAT 10 MILLION HUMAN BEINGS MAY BE STARVING IN INDIA NEXT YEAR.

THIS IS WHY, MR. CHAIRMAN, WE SUPPORT, AMONGST OTHERS, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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RECOMMEMTATION PUT FORWARD YESTERDAY BY THE DELEGATIONS OF INDIA, BANGLADESH AND KENYA, IDENTIFYING THE CONCERN OF THIS CONFERENCE, WITH THE IMMEDIATE SHOD AND FERTILIZER SITUATIOFNN TO THE UN CONFERENCE ON FOOD TO TAKE PLACE THIS NOVEMBER IN ROME.

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